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FOOD CONSERVATION FOR PEACE

More people in the world will be hungry and starving this year than at any time during the war.

But in the United States, after taking care of relief commitments, food consumption per capita in 1946 is expected to be greater than ever before -- even more than in 1945, which was 10 percent above pre-war.

Compared with an estimated per capita consumption of about 3,360 calories in the United States in 1946, the urban population in half of Europe is existing on about 2,000 calories per day, and 100,000,000 people in Europe will be receiving less than 1,500 calories per person per day.

The bread ration in France and Italy, for example, is only about one-half a loaf per day, with two-thirds of the diet being bread.

The people in Europe have been eating up their food supply at a rate that cannot be maintained until the next harvest. The next six months will thus be much worse than the last six months.

Reasons for World Food Crisis at this Time

That the food situation in war-torn areas would be critical had been anticipated for many months, but conditions are proving to be even more serious than at first thought. The Department of Agriculture's World Food Situation Report of October 1, 1945, estimated world food production per capita last year at 10 percent less than before the war. Later information, as reported in the World Food Situation Report of February 10, showed that world food production per person was down 12 percent below pre-war, with war-ravaged Europe about 20 percent below normal. The drop in production was concentrated in the countries most dependent on imports. Wheat was especially hard hit, as well as rice. The chief cause of the change in expectations from last fall to early February was drought.

Since the last harvest, wheat supplies -- in the U. S. as well as in Europe -- have disappeared more rapidly than was anticipated. U. S. wheat stocks on January 1 turned out to be 61 million bushels lower than had been expected earlier. One of the main reasons was heavier feeding of wheat to livestock.

Transportation has also been a serious problem, especially rail shipments to U. S. ports and also inside Europe.

It is now necessary to take unusual measures to supply the amount of wheat which was scheduled in early December for relief use -- namely, six million tons in the first half of 1946. If the U. S. makes good on this amount and other exporting countries supply another six million tons, there will still be a shortage of five million tons of wheat for emergency feeding.

In human terms, a million tons of wheat means a half year's supply of bread for 20 million people in devastated countries.

What Has Already Been Done

Record food shipments, especially wheat, are going into war-torn countries -- both from the United States and from other nations.

The U. S. has been shipping many times more wheat than before the war, and more than normal amounts of meat and dairy products, particularly cheese.

About 8 million tons of U. S. food for relief feeding were shipped to Europe in 1945, of which nearly 6 million tons were wheat and flour. Shipments of U. S. wheat and flour in January of this year were close to a million tons.

This country has been able to do so much because food production has been at record levels, and last year was more than 1/3 above pre-war. However, the United States produces only 10 percent of the world's food.

Great Britain has ordered further cuts in the ration of fats and eggs and has increased the extraction rate of wheat from 80 to 85 percent.

The President's Nine-Point Program

1. Campaign to conserve food, especially bread -- by consumers, retailers, and bakers.
 2. Stopping use of wheat and limiting use of other grains for alcohol and beer.
- Saving: 20 million bushels of grain by June 30.



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3. Extracting more flour from wheat (80 percent instead of 72 percent) and limiting distribution of flour. Saving: 25 million bushels of wheat by June 30.
4. Control over inventories of wheat and flour.
5. Rail priorities for wheat, corn, meat, and other essential foods.
6. Control over exports of wheat and flour.
7. Export of 365,000 tons of fats and oils, 1.6 billion pounds of meat, and increase in exports of dairy products, particularly cheese and evaporated milk.
8. Additional shipping for food to Europe and for movement of Philippine copra (for coconut oil.)
9. Conservation of grain used for feeding livestock.

How This Program affects the Public, the Food Industry, and Farmers

Consumers will not have to make any real sacrifice. Consumption of wheat flour per capita in 1946 is expected to be only 3 percent below 1945, and this will be 3 percent above pre-war.

First experimental loaves from a Department of Agriculture laboratory mill and kitchen showed that the new bread has a pleasing cream color. At a few feet away it could not be distinguished from bread baked from ordinary white flour. Tasters pronounced the new bread similar to white, some noting a "more wheaty" or "fuller" or "nutty" flavor. As for food value, eighty percent extraction flour as milled will have a higher content of iron, B vitamins, especially thiamine, and better quality protein than unenriched white flour. Flour and bread will continue to be enriched up to the levels required in War Food Order number one. The new flour will contain no visible bran, and there is no reason to believe it will have any different digestive effects from the white flour to which we have been accustomed.

Millers, Bakers, and Retailers still should be able to do a volume of business in flour and bread above pre-war, but bakers and millers will have a number of operating problems to meet because of the change in the extraction rate for flour.

Farmers will be affected more than any other group, since it has been profitable to feed grain to livestock. To save grain, they are being asked to market cattle and hogs at lighter weights, to reduce poultry flocks and to raise fewer chickens and turkeys. Farmers are also urged to market their wheat as rapidly as possible, after checking to see if elevator space is available.

Educational Campaign to Conserve Food for Peace

The first point in the President's program calls for an educational campaign to conserve food, especially bread. Under the leadership of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, the Department of Agriculture, the State Department, and other government agencies are carrying out through all media an intensive educational campaign to bring the facts of the world food crisis before the public and help conserve food for peace.

The most important time for emphasis is between now and about the first of May, but the world food crisis--especially the wheat shortage--will continue at least until after the next harvest.

Consumers, farmers, and businessmen will do their part if they know what their responsibilities are, and if they understand the reasons why. Here are the main responsibilities:

Consumers: Conserve food, especially bread.

Food Retailers: Ration scarce foods informally. Discourage hoarding. Suggest alternates.

Food Manufacturers and Processors: Explain need for action to avert starvation abroad.

Millers and Bakers: Conserve flour and bread.

Farmers: Market hogs and cattle at lighter weights, cull poultry flocks, raise fewer chickens and turkeys--to save grain. Also market wheat as rapidly as possible.

For Further Information:

1. Statement by the President. February 6, 1946. (Copies: White House)
 2. "World Food Situation--1946." 200 pages. Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, U.S.D.A. (Copies of release on this report--release #277-46: Press Service, Office of Information, USDA).
 3. Press release of February 6 on diets in Europe. (Copies: State Department)
 4. "The Nutritional Value of 80 Percent Flour," by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, U.S.D.A. (Release #282-46: Press Service, Office of Information, U.S.D.A.)
 5. "Ways to be Thrifty with Bread," by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, USDA. (Copies: Release #324-46: Press Service, Office of Information, U.S.D.A.)
 6. "What Other Countries Are Doing About Wheat." (Copies: State Department.)
- (Additional materials will be available from time to time and will be supplied on request.)

